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14. ABSTRACT <p>Today's complex, fast-paced, and technologically sophisticated operational environment requires a naval leader who is well versed in joint service operations, yet still has the warfare expertise required of his community to remain an effective and credible leader within his own service. The Navy's answer to producing these joint qualified, operational leaders is through a Professional Military Education (PME) continuum. A program designed to enhance an officer's professional development through service-specific education (NPME), joint education (JPME), leadership development (education), and graduate-level education. The Navy's PME Continuum, however, falls short of its aim to fully prepare today's naval officer for the demands of operational leadership in the 21st century.</p> <p>The PME model does not properly address how and when to implement PME into an officer's career path, nor does it answer how to prevent an officer from becoming stovepiped in his or her community while attaining the requisite tactical expertise within that community necessary to become an effective and credible naval leader. The Navy needs leadership doctrine and a professional development program tailored to the unique demands of Naval Service to successfully prepare its officers to meet the unique and dynamic challenges of operational leadership in the 21st century.</p>					
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**NAVAL LEADERSHIP: DEVELOPING OPERATIONAL LEADERS FOR THE 21<sup>ST</sup>  
CENTURY**

by

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**A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Maritime Operations.**

**The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.**

**Signature: \_\_\_\_\_**

**4 May 2009**

## **Abstract**

Today's complex, fast-paced, and technologically sophisticated operational environment requires a naval leader who is well versed in joint service operations, yet still has the warfare expertise required of his community to remain an effective and credible leader within his own service. The Navy's answer to producing these joint qualified, operational leaders is through a Professional Military Education (PME) continuum. A program designed to enhance an officer's professional development through service-specific education (NPME), joint education (JPME), leadership development (education), and graduate-level education. The Navy's PME Continuum, however, falls short of its aim to fully prepare today's naval officer for the demands of operational leadership in the 21st century.

The PME model does not properly address how and when to implement PME into an officer's career path, nor does it answer how to prevent an officer from becoming stovepiped in his or her community while attaining the requisite tactical expertise within that community necessary to become an effective and credible naval leader. The Navy needs leadership doctrine and a professional development program tailored to the unique demands of Naval Service to successfully prepare its officers to meet the unique and dynamic challenges of operational leadership in the 21st century.

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## INTRODUCTION

The United States Navy enjoys a proud heritage and a rich history full of great leaders. Admirals Chester W. Nimitz, William “Bull” Halsey, and Raymond A. Spruance are a few names that instantly come to mind. Today’s world, however, requires a new kind of naval leader. A more diverse and dynamic leader prepared to operate across the entire range of military operations. The U.S. Navy has seen a shift in its role as a dominant “Blue Water Navy” during the Cold War years to one that operates primarily in the littorals, capable of conducting missions ranging from power projection ashore to Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief. The U.S. Navy requires leaders that are well versed in joint service operations, who can effectively work with multi-national or coalition forces, yet still have the warfare expertise required of an officer’s specific community to remain an effective and credible leader within one’s own service. Even in their day, Admiral Nimitz and General MacArthur foresaw the advantages and realized the necessity for “strategically focused, critical thinking and sharply honed operational and analytical skills for what today is called ‘joint’ and ‘combined’ warfighting.”<sup>1</sup>

Many would argue that leaders are born, not made.<sup>2</sup> Certainly there are many character traits that effective leaders possess, and many of those character traits are shaped over the course of a lifetime.<sup>3</sup> Intelligence, integrity, self-confidence, and vision, are just a few essential qualities that an effective leader exudes and utilizes on a daily basis. Character traits alone, however, do not necessarily make a leader. The road to “becoming an excellent

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<sup>1</sup>Rear Adm. Jacob L. Shuford, USN, “Commanding at the Operational Level,” U.S. Naval Institute *Proceedings* 133, no. 5 (May 2007), 24.

<sup>2</sup> Edgar F. Puryear, Jr., *American Admiralship* (Annapolis, MD.: Naval Institute Press, 2005), pp. xii-xiii.

<sup>3</sup> Toraiheeb Al Harbi, *Navy Definitions of Leadership and LMET/NAVLEAD Competency Clusters Compared to Selected Leadership Theories*, (Monterey, CA: Naval Postgraduate School, 1995) 39-40.

leader requires hard work, intensive training, careful coaching, and deliberate feedback from seasoned leaders.”<sup>4</sup> Within the Navy, that road relies heavily on *on-the-job training* due to the uniqueness of the maritime operating environment and the complexity and technical sophistication of the U.S. Navy’s equipment. Unfortunately, today’s operational leader needs more than on-the-job training to be effective in the highly volatile and constantly changing security environment of the 21st century.

Institutions such as the U. S. Naval Academy, Naval Postgraduate School, and the Naval War College, are world renowned for teaching the art of leadership, and in fact, these centers of excellence have many programs designed to foster and develop those leadership qualities desired at all levels of the Navy’s officer corps. One such program is the Navy’s Professional Military Education (PME) Continuum. A program that establishes PME milestones throughout an officer’s career that “...provides a systematic way to develop leaders.”<sup>5</sup> This program satisfies the joint educational requirements outlined by the Officer Professional Military Education Policy (OPMEP) established in the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) Instruction 1800.01C, but the U.S. Navy’s PME Continuum falls short of its aim to fully prepare today’s naval officer for the demands of operational leadership in the 21st century.<sup>6</sup>

Accompanying this shortfall in the Navy’s professional development program is a deficiency in Navy leadership doctrine. In fact, there is no Navy leadership doctrine! By contrast, the Army, Air Force, and Marines have established leadership doctrine, which

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<sup>4</sup> W. Brad Johnson and Gregory P. Harper, *Becoming a Leader the Annapolis Way* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2005), 18.

<sup>5</sup> Adm. Michael Mullen to the Vice Chief of Naval Operations, “Joint Leader Development,” draft memorandum, circa 2004, 2.

<sup>6</sup> Chairman, U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, “Officer Professional Military Education Policy,” CJCS Instruction 1800.01C, 22 December 2005, A-1 – A-3.

outlines their respective services' concepts of leadership and officer development.<sup>7</sup> They provide a framework for ensuring their future leaders receive the experience, education, training, and career milestones required, not only to meet the demands of joint operational command, but necessary for their promotion within the ranks as well. The fact that the Navy is the only service without leadership doctrine may, in part, be due to the nature of its operations. The unique operating environment of maritime warfare and the inherent complexity of its systems and equipment, undeniably has created a culture far different from that of the other services. As a result, "the Navy's leadership-development philosophy is rooted in cultivation of leadership competency through operational experience, anchored solidly in a fundamental cultural bias toward on-the-job training."<sup>8</sup> But what impact has that philosophy had on the Navy's ability to produce effective leaders in today's joint-service mantra?

### **WHERE DO WE GET SUCH MEN?**

Everything starts and ends with leadership. Nothing else we accomplish, no other priority we pursue, is of much consequence if we do not have sound and effective leadership in place to enact it. We all have a responsibility to develop our own leadership potential and that of the sailors.<sup>9</sup>

Despite the obvious importance the Navy places on leadership, as Admiral Mullen so succinctly stated above, the Navy has continuously struggled to define and implement a formal process designed to produce effective naval leaders. Before delving into the task of how to create an effective leader, defining what is required to be an effective leader is a logical first step.

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<sup>7</sup> Gregory D. Reilly, *Building U.S Navy Officer Operational Leadership Skills: Back to Basics*, (Newport RI: Naval War College Press, 2007), 11.

<sup>8</sup> Christopher D. Hayes, "Developing the Navy's Operational Leaders," *Naval War College Review* 61, no. 3 (Summer 2008): 96.

<sup>9</sup> Adm. Michael Mullen, "CNO Guidance for 2006," quoted in Christopher D. Hayes, "Developing the Navy's Operational Leaders," *Naval War College Review* 61, no. 3 (Summer 2008): 77.



In each ship there is only one man who, in the hour of emergency or peril at sea, can turn to no other man. There is one who alone is ultimately responsible for the safe navigation, engineering performance, accurate gunfiring and morale of his ship. He is Commanding Officer. He is the ship.

This is the most difficult and demanding assignment in the Navy. There is not an instant during his tour of duty as Commanding Officer that he can escape the grasp of command responsibility. His privileges in view of his obligations are most ludicrously small; nevertheless command is the spur which has given the Navy its great leaders.”<sup>10</sup>

The burden of command has never been as challenging as is today in the 21st century.

“The complexity of the battle space, the speed of change, and the cognitive demands of integrated information networks all conspire to burden leadership in ways that were inconceivable less than a generation ago.”<sup>11</sup> Today’s operational leader is inherently joint. An officer must be familiar and, in fact, comfortable with interservice practices, languages, and cultures. More often than not, today’s operations are conducted in concert with multi-national or coalition forces, requiring the commander to be astute in international diplomacy as well. Further, Admiral Mullen declares “The future of national and international security relies on the interoperability and cooperation among the services, the interagency, international partners and non-government organizations....But we are only as good as the contribution we make to the overall effort.”<sup>12</sup> In an effort to satisfy this responsibility, Admiral Mullen instituted a Professional Military Education (PME) continuum aimed at developing competent joint officers for positions of leadership, which will be covered in greater depth shortly.

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<sup>10</sup> Joseph Conrad, “The Prestige, Privilege and the Burden of Command,” in *Command at Sea*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed., ed. William P. Mack and Albert H. Konetzni, Jr., (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1982), xi.

<sup>11</sup> Hayes, “Developing the Navy’s Operational Leaders,” 78.

<sup>12</sup> Mullen, “Joint Leader Development,” 1.

In addition to being well versed in joint operations, today's naval leader must be a master of their tactical domain. "For example, for a number of flag billets, such as carrier strike group command billets, it is critical to have a warfare expertise," whether it is in aviation warfare, surface warfare, or submarine warfare.<sup>13</sup> These subcultures within the U.S. Navy, however, have created very distinct naval communities, or stovepipes, each with its own warfare specialty and unique skill set. The experience base an officer accrues while in that community is a crucial component in the development of a competent operational leader, without it an officer has no credibility. Additionally, the demands of operating state-of-the-art aircraft, sophisticated surface combatants, and nuclear propulsion systems, require years of study and training to master. With so many demands already placed on an officer's professional development, it is easy to see why the Navy's leadership supports the assumption that leadership "just happens" as an officer progresses through their operational assignments.<sup>14</sup>

This creates two significant problems for the Navy when developing a formalized process for preparing its leaders to meet the joint challenges of the 21st century. Number one, how and when should the Navy integrate a professional development program into an officer's career to ensure that officer attains all the requisite expertise in their tactical domain necessary for leadership growth and promotion within their community, yet still acquire the joint leadership skills critical for the challenges of today's operational commander? The second problem stems from the time investment associated with gaining that invaluable leadership through experience. Specifically, the first 15 to 20 years of an officer's career can be spent stovepiped in a community, devoted to the pursuit of their tactical acumen. A naval

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<sup>13</sup> Lawrence M. Hanser et al., *Developing Senior Navy Leaders* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2008), xvi.

<sup>14</sup> Hayes, "Developing the Navy's Operational Leaders," 77.

officer's career is "constantly under pressure to become more narrowly occupationally focused (e.g., consider the career path that a Navy fighter pilot must trod to become a flag officer)." <sup>15</sup> Officers should have more exposure to the other communities (aviation, surface, and submarine) within the Navy in order to be a credible *naval* officer. "Before the Navy can realize its ambition to create joint leaders, it must achieve competence in developing fully qualified *naval* leaders." <sup>16</sup>

## **PREPARING FOR THE LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES OF THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY**

The Navy's answer to producing operational leaders is through a PME continuum. This program, designed to enhance an officer's professional development through service-specific education (NPME), joint education (JPME), leadership development (education), and graduate-level education, helps build the well-rounded leader that on-the-job training alone fails to produce. <sup>17</sup> Admiral Mullen envisions a balanced approach to developing joint leaders, stating "the Navy will do so for its officers and senior enlisted through a mix of Joint and Navy-specific Professional Military Education (PME), Joint and naval experience, and Joint and naval individual training. PME is at the heart of this process; the schoolhouses are lynchpin to producing the effects that I seek." <sup>18</sup>

As shown in figure 1, an officer receives PME at various milestones throughout their career. After a more in-depth look, a couple of shortcomings stand out in this model. Number one, it clearly addresses the joint aspect of the future leader's education with both intermediate and senior Joint Professional Military Education courses, but there is no outline for leadership education or training. When it comes to learning how to lead Sailors, Marines,

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<sup>15</sup> Hanser et al., *Developing Senior Navy Leaders*, 2.

<sup>16</sup> Hayes, "Developing the Navy's Operational Leaders," 90.

<sup>17</sup> CJCS, "Officer Professional Military Education Policy," A-A-1 – A-A-9.

<sup>18</sup> Mullen, "Joint Leader Development," 1.

Airmen, and Soldiers, an officer is still relegated to on-the-job training. Each officer can have vastly different experiences to draw from depending on variables such as; leaders they served under, combat, OPTEMPO, size of units they served in, in-residence vs. non-residence PME education, etc. As Sergeant Major of the Army Richard Kidd expressed “Soldiers learn to be good leaders from good leaders.”<sup>19</sup> This is certainly true and probably one of the best ways to learn about leadership, but it assumes that every officer will be lucky enough to have a good leader to mentor him or her.<sup>20</sup> Unfortunately, that lack of standardization amongst officers’ backgrounds can mean the difference between success for some leaders and failure for others.

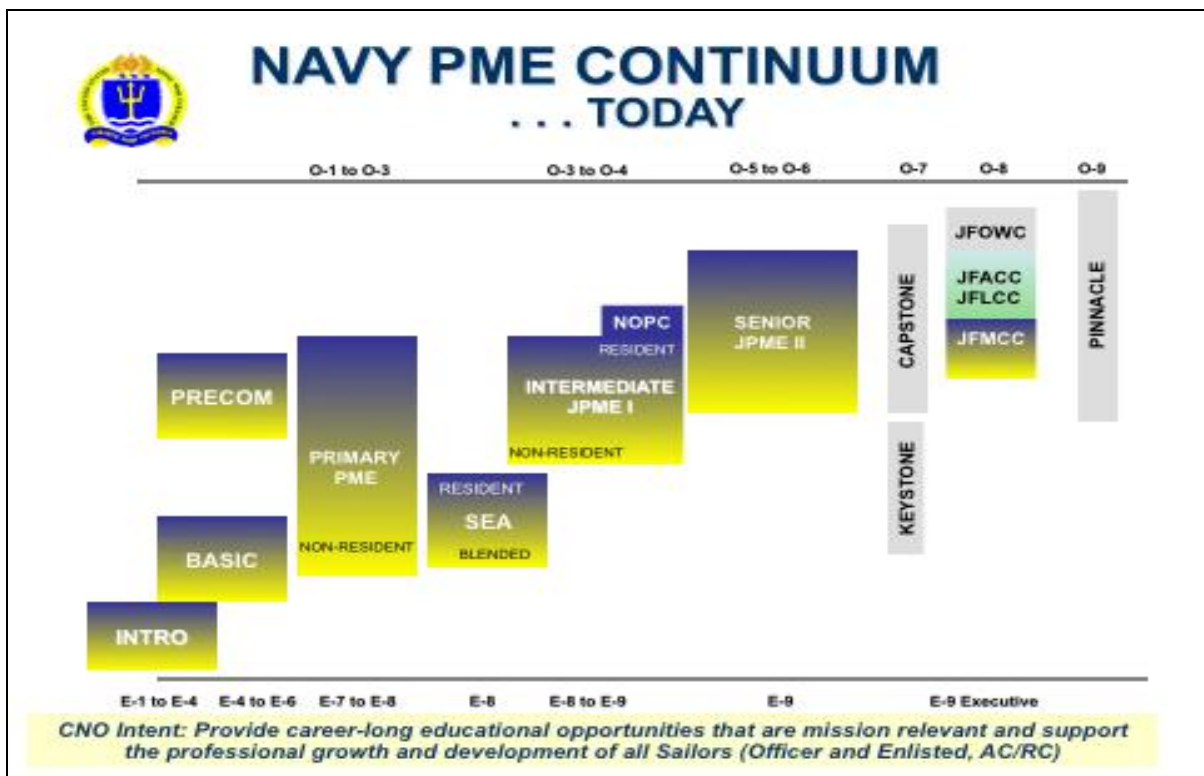


Figure 1: Navy PME Continuum, May 2004.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Jason M. Pape, “Reassessing Army Leadership in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century,” *Military Review* 89, no. 1 (January-February 2009), 97.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 97.

<sup>21</sup> William R. Spain, “EPME Continuum Implementation,” Powerpoint, 24 May 2006, Newport, RI: Naval War College, Associate Dean of Academics.

The second shortcoming in this model is the method for receiving this PME. The Navy's Primary PME is executed through distance learning by accessing a computer website and completing it on-line vice in the classroom of either the Naval War College or the Naval Postgraduate School.<sup>22</sup> Intermediate Joint Professional Military Education, or JPME phase I, is offered to students in-residence at one of the services' war colleges, but many students elect to complete their JPME I requirements via correspondence courses. The 1986 Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act dictated that officers would attain Joint Military Education, but it didn't specify how that officer would obtain it.<sup>23</sup> The service schools such as the Naval War College have extremely competitive entrance requirements due to the finite number of student throughput they can manage as well as a large percentage of foreign military students attending those institutions. Additionally, many students complete their JPME I requirements via correspondence while concurrently serving another set of orders such as a Department Head tour.

Finishing JPME I via correspondence can be advantageous to both the schoolhouse and the student. For the service colleges, it provides otherwise unavailable seats in the classroom. For the student, it supplements their resume, allowing them to complete several career milestones in a shorter time span; ultimately making them more qualified, creating more job opportunities and increasing their competitiveness for Command Screen Boards, etc. Another benefit of completing JPME as a non-resident is that it allows for flexibility in that officer's career timeline. A typical JPME I resident student attends the war college either just prior to or just after their Department Head tour. A non-resident student has the

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<sup>22</sup> Reilly, *Building U.S. Navy Officer Operational Leadership Skills*, 12.

<sup>23</sup> CJCS, "Officer Professional Military Education Policy," A-A-5.

ability to complete the JPME I correspondence course anytime between the rank of O-3 to O-5 select, a span of eight to nine years!

Despite these advantages, the cost of receiving JPME as a non-resident is significant. There are many sacrifices associated with an officer trying to complete JPME concurrent with his duties. It can have a negative impact at the workplace, affecting both the time an officer spends at work and in the quality of work produced. It can have ill affects on an officer's home life, family and the intangibles of quality of life. Additionally, one of the primary purposes for acquiring a joint education is to gain exposure to the other services. By attending a war college *in-residence*, a student not only experiences the other services, but the practices, cultures, and traditions of foreign military services as well. Finally, "Admiral Rickover has said on many occasions that the most important ingredient of leadership is *knowledge*."<sup>24</sup> Students who attend a service college in-residence are effectively drinking straight from the fountain of knowledge. The classroom environment and a live professor provide a more interactive learning environment that is more conducive to a student becoming fully immersed in the course material. In fact, students attending the Naval War College or the Air Force's Air Command and Staff College even earn Master of Arts degrees while satisfying their JPME I requirements. All of these factors contribute to an officer's overall preparedness and capability to meet the operational demands of the 21st century.

The senior course (JPME II) designed for pay grades O-5 and O-6, prepares "potential flag officers to function as full partners in high level planning and policy positions in Washington or on regional combatant commander staffs around the world."<sup>25</sup> Like the intermediate course, JPME II will be a critical prerequisite for officer promotion and

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<sup>24</sup> William P. Mack and Albert H. Konetzni, Jr., *Command at Sea*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1982), 20.

<sup>25</sup> Shuford, "Commanding at the Operational Level," 25.

selection for many career-enhancing billets. This requirement was outlined in the 1986 Goldwater-Nichols Act, mandating that the services would “engage fully in joint officer development.”<sup>26</sup> Despite that congressional mandate, only 20 percent of today’s Navy flag officers graduated from residential programs at a senior service college.<sup>27</sup>

Rounding out the Navy’s PME Continuum are programs designed specifically for flag officer development. CAPSTONE, KEYSTONE, PINNACLE, and the Joint Force Maritime Component Commander course are instrumental in providing our Navy’s senior leadership with the tools necessary to guide the Navy through the complexities of the 21st century. Unfortunately, these leadership courses are offered extremely late in an officer’s career and, for all intents and purposes, are received just in time.

The third shortcoming of this PME Continuum is the fact that there is no integration of communities built into its construct. Prior to the Second World War, the Navy prided itself as a dominant surface force centered around the battleship. In the post World War II era, however, a new Navy emerged. The United States became a world superpower and the U.S. Navy was now the strongest navy in the world. With that transformation came a new culture and diversity within the Navy. Battleships gave way to aircraft carriers and naval aviation, submarines emerged as a prominent force, and the three communities (aviation, surface, and submarine) formed “a triad of naval culture and power.”<sup>28</sup> The Cold War years saw rapid advances in technology and capability that continue to present day. Those advances have helped create a Naval Service that is extremely capable of facing the challenges presented across the wide range of military operations found today.

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<sup>26</sup> Hayes, “Developing the Navy’s Operational Leaders,” 89.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>28</sup> Hayes, “Developing the Navy’s Operational Leaders,” 88.

That technical sophistication and complexity of our combatant force, however, comes with a price. In order to operate the Navy's state-of-the-art equipment, and remain on the cutting edge of tactics and procedures, it requires a huge investment in time and in the training of naval personnel. Although individuals become specialists in their fields, they become entrenched in their community with little chance to step back and see the Navy's *big picture* and gain exposure to other naval communities.<sup>29</sup> This has contributed to creating very narrow career paths within an officer's tactical domain as well. If an "officer strays from the path, it may mean decreased opportunities for command, an important stepping-stone to senior leadership billets."<sup>30</sup> Therein lies the dilemma of developing well-rounded operational leaders who understand the Navy and not just their community, yet still maintain the skill and technical expertise required to promote, and be a credible leader within their tactical domain.

While there is no dedicated cross training or exposure of officers to the other naval communities built into the PME Continuum, one could argue that there is actually opportunity for it to happen. First, an officer is often exposed to the different communities through their accession program. The U.S. Naval Academy and ROTC programs often allow future officers a chance to experience different career fields during the course of their education by sponsoring one to two week visits to various active duty units. Second, Navy PME (NPME) is designed to teach U.S. Naval history and practices as well as provide insight into the many different U.S. Navy communities. The problem is that this training is computer based, as mentioned earlier. There is no opportunity for student-to-teacher interaction and no opportunity for the students to ask questions concerning the various communities that are discussed in the courseware. Finally, students who attend the Naval

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<sup>29</sup> Reilly, *Building U.S. Navy Officer Operational Leadership Skills*, 13.

<sup>30</sup> Hanser et al., *Developing Senior Navy Leaders*, 13.



War College in-residence for JPME spend a year with their peers from the other naval communities. In fact, the school divides the students by designator, or Military Occupational Specialty (MOS), ensuring representation from different naval communities amongst the classes, which contributes to the spreading of knowledge and cross training between those communities. Unfortunately, an officer is often at the 13 or 14 year mark in their career before attending the War College, so exposure to other communities comes very late. And for all the students that complete their JPME requirements through correspondence programs there is no intraservice exposure opportunity.

Ultimately, this stovepiping has had a detrimental effect on creating broad-minded naval officers. “The Navy must focus on intraservice officer development before it can fully realize effective operational leadership in an interservice joint operating environment.”<sup>31</sup> The Army, Air Force, and Marines have effectively integrated PME and leadership training into their officer career paths through mandatory education requirements and a culture that ties promotions to educational milestones.<sup>32</sup> That education imbedded in an officer’s career mindset, and defined leadership training doctrine found in their respective services, has greatly enhanced diversification amongst their officer corps and has helped bridge the officer communities within their services as well.<sup>33</sup> Naval officers, whether they are aviators, surface warriors, or submariners, need to step outside of their parochial stovepipes in order to become true Navy leaders, and only then are they poised to meet the demands of today’s joint operational environment.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Hayes, “Developing the Navy’s Operational Leaders,” 78.

<sup>32</sup> Reilly, *Building U.S. Navy Officer Operational Leadership Skills*, 13.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>34</sup> Hayes, “Developing the Navy’s Operational Leaders,” 89-90.

A final shortcoming in the Navy's PME Continuum worth noting is in its alignment with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff's (CJCS) *Vision for Joint Officer Development* (JOD). The JOD identifies three joint-leader competencies; Strategically Minded, Critical Thinker, and Skilled Joint War Fighter.<sup>35</sup> Of those three competencies, Skilled Joint War Fighter is not covered in the PME Continuum, because in order to be considered a Skilled Joint War Fighter, one must receive joint experience beyond the classroom. The CJCS vision for JOD actually addresses this by creating a Joint Learning Continuum, which consists of four supporting pillars.<sup>36</sup> Joint Experience is one of those four pillars along with Joint Individual Training (JIT), Joint Professional Military Education (JPME), and Self-development.<sup>37</sup> The Navy's PME Continuum, however, only addresses the JPME pillar, leaving the remaining three pillars to the service member's responsibility.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

If the Navy intends to develop operational leaders capable of meeting the demands of the 21st century, it should focus on an education and training program designed to produce officers that are masters of their tactical domain, yet understand the other communities and their roles, to truly act as *naval* leaders. Additionally, that program needs to develop officers who can excel in the joint operational arena. To help with that the Navy needs leadership doctrine that governs its leadership development process and specifies how and when its officers will receive that leadership education. That doctrine should also define how and when officers would receive their Professional Military Education, to include service specific PME (NPME) and joint education (JPME). Finally, the Navy leadership doctrine should tie

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<sup>35</sup> Chairman, U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Vision for Joint Officer Development*, U.S. Government White Paper (Washington, D.C.: Joint Staff, November 2005), 4.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 5.

the Navy's leadership development process to the Service's mission, culture, and core values, therefore, giving every member *buy-in* to its concept. It should designate career milestones that link PME and leadership training to promotion and eligibility for career enhancing assignments as well. Sound leadership doctrine complemented by an effective PME program would greatly enhance an officer's operational leadership development, not to mention a better understanding of career milestones with regard to joint leadership education and experience. Because of the direct link between an officer's career and their leadership education, the Bureau of Naval Personnel, along with the institutions conducting the education and training, should be heavily involved in the design of Navy leadership doctrine.

Next, the Navy should incorporate a leadership education course into its PME Continuum designed to standardize its officer's leadership qualities, vice relying on experience and observation based learning. Additionally, every effort should be made to provide a schoolhouse environment for its courses offered in the PME Continuum. Whether it is NPME, JPME I, JPME II, or a leadership course, students should attend institutions such as the Naval War College or the Naval Postgraduate School as a resident to gain maximum exposure to the other naval communities, services, international forces, and receive the student-teacher interaction so beneficial to higher learning.

Furthermore, the PME Continuum should build windows of opportunity for cross-community exposure, allowing officers to cross stovepipe boundaries several times throughout their careers, so the first time they set foot outside their respective communities is not while they are attending a service college or, worse yet, after they pin on a star. The timing piece of the PME Continuum is important. Officers obviously need sufficient time to master the complexities of their tactical domain, however, they still need to branch out and

experience other communities, meet education and career milestones, and operate effectively in the joint service environment. The PME Continuum needs to address this timeline carefully, or provide flexibility within its design, to ensure every officer is poised for success in his or her naval career.

The Navy's PME Continuum is a step in the right direction toward developing the joint operational leaders of tomorrow. It only satisfies one of the four required pillars identified in the *Vision for Joint Officer Development* (JOD) from the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS), however, Joint Professional Military Education (JPME).<sup>38</sup> It should incorporate the remaining pillars; Joint Individual Training, Joint Experience, and Self-Development, into its PME model vice leaving them to the responsibility of the service member.

Naval Leadership doctrine married to an effective PME program, officers attending leadership and JPME courses in-residence, opportunity for cross community exposure, and aligning the Navy's PME Continuum with the chairman's *Vision for Joint Officer Development*, could set the stage for today's naval officer to conquer the unforeseen complexities of the 21st century security environment.

## CONCLUSIONS

Today's complex, fast-paced, and technologically sophisticated operating environment requires a new and innovative type of naval leader. One who is a master of their tactical domain, yet has diversity beyond their community enterprise, making them a true *naval* officer. One who is not only well versed in intersevice relationships and joint operations, but multinational and coalition force partnerships as well.

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<sup>38</sup> CJCS, *Vision for Joint Officer Development*, 5.

Most great leaders possess character traits that have been developed and, in fact, refined over the course of their entire careers and beyond. The Navy subscribes to the leaders are made, not born theory, however, and argues that education, training, and experience, are crucial in molding effective leaders.<sup>39</sup> The Navy's vision for developing tomorrow's operational leaders is through its PME Continuum, an approach "that will systematically and comprehensively develop Navy flag officers experienced, schooled, and ready to lead maritime forces in the complex, joint multinational operations that characterize the new security environment."<sup>40</sup> Unfortunately, the U.S. Navy's PME Continuum falls short of its aim to fully prepare today's naval officer for the demands of operational leadership in the 21st century.

There are two significant barriers associated with the Navy's PME Continuum and its leadership training ideology. First, how and when should the Navy implement PME into an officer's career path, and second, how does the Navy prevent an officer from becoming stovepiped within a naval community, yet still ensure that officer receives the requisite tactical expertise within that community necessary to become an effective and credible naval leader. At first glance, the Navy's PME Continuum appears to address these issues, but with a closer look some significant shortcomings are revealed. Specifically, it provides the joint aspect of a future leader's training, but there is no dedicated leadership education or training built into its construct. Next, the method for officers receiving their PME is deficient. Computer based, on-line Navy PME does not provide a learning environment conducive to student-teacher interaction, and students who accomplish their JPME requirements via correspondence miss the opportunity to work with members from the other services,

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<sup>39</sup> Matt Waesche, *Leadership Theory and Application*, 6<sup>TH</sup> ed. (Boston, MA: Pearson Custom Publishing, 2004), 10-11.

<sup>40</sup> Shuford, "Commanding at the Operational Level," 28.

international military students, and even other Navy students from its various communities.

Furthermore, there is no community integration designed into the PME Continuum.

Aviators, surface warriors, and submariners may have a chance to cross if they attend institutions such as the Naval War College or Naval Postgraduate School in-residence, but even then that opportunity usually is not afforded until he or she has accrued 12 to 15 years of service. If an officer elects to complete their JPME requirements in a non-resident program they may not get exposed to other communities until reaching the O-6 or flag ranks. And Finally, the Navy's PME Continuum is not aligned with the chairman's *Vision for Joint Officer Development*.

In the end, "Navy leadership recognizes that Professional Military Education (PME), combined with operational experience, must accrue across an entire career to provide Navy flag officers ... who can conceive and articulate options for effective maritime component employment in joint and multinational operations."<sup>41</sup> Unfortunately, the Navy's PME Continuum does not produce effective operational leaders, it produces officers educated in joint operational theory. To produce effective leaders the Navy PME Continuum should have dedicated leadership education courses built into its construct, vice relying on experience and observation to train its future operational leaders. Furthermore, as Commander Christopher Hayes points out, the lack of Naval leadership doctrine has left leadership training to the discretion of community enterprises, resulting in officers with priorities tied to the technical and tactical demands of their association vice the Navy as a whole.<sup>42</sup> The Navy needs leadership doctrine tied to an effective PME program that allows officers to attend JPME and leadership courses in-residence. Additionally, the PME

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 25.

<sup>42</sup> Hayes, "Developing the Navy's Operational Leaders," 91.

Continuum should have opportunities for officers to break out of their respective enterprises and experience other Navy communities. And finally, to produce fully Joint Qualified Officers (JQO), the Navy's PME Continuum should contain all of the four pillars outlined in the Joint Learning Continuum, not just JPME.<sup>43</sup>

If "everything starts and ends with leadership," the Navy needs leadership doctrine and a professional development program that is infused in an officer's career path from day one.<sup>44</sup> In order to perform as competent and effective joint operational leaders, today's naval officers must be armed with sound leadership doctrine and a PME Continuum that is tailored to the unique demands of our Naval Service. Once that can be achieved, U.S. Naval officers will truly be poised to meet the unique and dynamic challenges of operational leadership in the 21st century.

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<sup>43</sup> CJCS, *Vision for Joint Officer Development*, 8.

<sup>44</sup> Mullen, "CNO Guidance for 2006," quoted in Hayes, "Developing the Navy's Operational Leaders," 77.

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